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Institutions in Relationship to the Community*

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FOR many years now we have been discussing this topic. As a profession, we recognized a long time ago that an institution should be closely integrated with community life, and should not be permitted to withdraw or be pushed into an isolated area of functioning. Paper after paper has been written on the right of the child to his own personal possessions, to distinctive and preferably not secondhand clothing, to participation in public schools, utilization of public playgrounds and libraries, and general interplay on an equality basis in all phases of community life. No one denies today the premise that the child should not be exploited in the name of community support, and there is growing recognition of the institutional child's right to privacy from indiscriminate public scrutiny.

Yet it would be naïve not to concede that vestiges of what we have come to think of as "institutional functioning" cling tenaciously to the best of programs. Any day you may come up sharply discovering a presumably "standard" service, carrying through on a policy which was criticized in the National Conference proceedings of ten or twenty years ago and is generally conceded to be unsound. Perhaps this is because these concepts are still unknown to some institutional administrators. More frequently, it seems to me, the individuals have heard in detail exactly what is believed to be sound functioning and carry on under a cloud of guilt and anxiety over their inability to operate in conformance with it.

The interesting question, therefore, is what *perpetuates* practices which are well known among professional groups to be unsound? Why is it so desperately difficult to bring high standard functioning to institutional care and make it survive?

One of the problems is unquestionably the traditional way in which communities have come to think about institutions for children. We are all familiar with that combination of generous patronage and suspicious rejection with which the residents of all children's institutions have to cope. The second problem which causes great confusion on the part of institutional staff is the fact that a great many professional theories which have evolved out of non-resident practice are set up as equally applicable to resident care, without ever having been tested in an institutional setting. That is a paper in and of itself and I

do not propose to deal with it here. The third problem would seem to me to be that a great many policies and procedures which are entirely practical and feasible, provided an institution is adequately staffed, can be actually destructive and vicious if it is not adequately staffed, and that most children's institutions today are not.

Community Attitude Toward Institution Children

Let us look, first of all, at this question of community attitude. Many of us inherited situations where the board member or the community at large had made one or another phase of the agency service

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a hobby. They had learned to enjoy, in terms of their own responses, certain ways of doing things, and they reacted with injury and defense when it was suggested that they discontinue. In the face of this injured feeling many administrative heads have had to give ground. But presumably we have been hired by a responsible group to give leadership in a peculiarly difficult area of functioning. I doubt if anything very positive can be accomplished anywhere until there is some forthright clearance between the executive and the board of directors as to the purposes for which the institution is functioning, how those purposes shall be carried out, and what is the board's and the executive's respective part in those procedures.

By and large, no program is any better than its board of directors. Temporarily, out of adroitness and a kind of evasion, an executive may build a service far better than the board is able to comprehend. That is to put to sea in a leaky boat. The first job, therefore, is to sell the board members themselves on sound practices and to be perfectly sure that they are behind you in any changes which you want to make. I am constantly impressed, not with the resistance of board members to new and progressive concepts, but with their accessibility to them. Are you trying to institute a policy because somebody wrote a book saying it ought to be done, or because intellectually you understand why it ought to be done, and can be articulate and logical in explaining it to the board?

For instance, a great many institutions which have convinced their board members of the desirability of having their children attend public school, because they believe this offers a broader life experience, enter them with an apologetic sort of "I hope he's going to do all right—let us know if he doesn't" which a few weeks or months later brings an aggrieved, "*Your* children are causing difficulty and we don't think they should be here."

This whole question of the relationship of the child to the public school system is one which should be established as basic policy between the administrative board of the agency and the administration of the public schools. Too frequently it is fought out as a private war between a harassed institutional matron and a harassed school principal. We established early in our program that it was highly desirable for a child to attend public school as soon as he could assimilate it. We accepted also that it was unfair to ask the school to continue with the child obviously failing to make an adjustment. Consequently, the public schools provide us with a full-time tutor for the child presenting educational lags

and the youngster whose emotional adjustment causes him to be a disciplinary problem in school.

When we started our program we took over what had once been a large institutional plant for dependent children. During the first months of our operation it was not at all unusual for us to get telephone calls from indignant neighbors stating that our children were playing in the street or had passed their house on a coaster wagon or were otherwise "loose" in the neighborhood. Now, as a matter of fact, we do ask our children not to go beyond our play fence without permission, but that's our rule, between us and the child, and has nothing to do with the community. If he is making trouble, he is vulnerable, as any other member of the community is vulnerable if he is making trouble, but his right to come and go as a self-respecting citizen cannot be questioned, and we have stood forthrightly for that right.

I remember on one occasion when a child was sent to get a library card and a harassed librarian telephoned to inquire what would happen if the child incurred a fine or lost a book. It had been her experience in the past that institutional heads said frankly they couldn't do anything about it, that the child was a community ward.

The whole question of the degree to which any institutional administration is responsible for the acts of children in the community is a nice legal and sociological problem. In the state of Washington, where even a parent is not responsible for the destruction caused by a minor child, it is extremely doubtful if any suit could be won against institutional administration for the act of a child under care. Actually, however, responsible parents do try to make good within their means for any destruction caused by their youngsters.

Our agency, after a joint meeting of board and staff, decided to carry in the budget a flexible item which could be used to make good any minor destruction or damage caused by our children. Major matters are referred to the board of directors for consideration.

That means that if a child loses a school book or comes home from the ten-cent store with an article which he has stolen and broken so that it is not returnable, the agency can immediately whisk him back to make good the debt and assign the child the necessary work to finish the transaction.

Actually, in the course of any given year, the amount of money involved is not large. Even with emotionally disturbed children it has not run for us to much over \$200, although we have been fortunate enough to have several instances of major damage covered entirely by insurance held by the owner. There might

well be a point where an institution might be forced to say, as a parent might be forced to say, that to meet a certain claim would be to go into bankruptcy. However, the amount of relaxation and dignity which can come to institutional people and to children when an irate neighbor or librarian or businessman can be met with a self-respecting "I'm sorry, of course we'll pay for it," can go a long way to lift this shamefaced burden which we in the institutional field seem to carry.

That raises, however, another point which it seems to me can be well taken. That is, that the institutional child, along with all other people, must be assumed to be innocent until proven guilty. Dealing as we do with emotionally disturbed children, there was a brief period in our history when a policeman trying to investigate damage to anything which occurred in our end of town seemed to think that his immediate procedure was to interview the children at the Ryther Child Center. I think we made the mistake originally of assuming that no child was ever to be interviewed because he was "sick." Today we are facing more realistically that a child cannot assume the privileges of citizenship unless he can assume the responsibilities of citizenship. If we feel that a child is too emotionally disturbed to go to school or to leave our playground, we feel it entirely consistent to say that he is not to be interviewed by anybody but a staff person. If, however, we have entered him in school or let him go to a community playground without adult supervision, then the only question is whether or not the officer had any reason to believe that this child might be involved, which would justify his questioning him, and if so, that like any other parent, we would sit in when the child was questioned. If it was a small matter we have assured the officer that whatever discipline or retribution was involved would be handled by us. If the matter was of sufficient importance so that the officer felt he should refer it to the Juvenile Court we have never tried to wheedle him out of taking such action, but assumed forthrightly that he had the right to make the report and that we would deal with the court. This attitude has produced over the years a relationship of great relaxation and good will between us and law enforcement bodies.

However, a probation officer once complained to me that it seemed to him institutional workers were more defensive about children under their care who came in conflict with the law than social workers working with children in their own homes. However, as we talked it over, he granted readily that this was probably logical and desirable. It should be every

child's birthright to be under the care and protection of someone who believes peculiarly in him. I think it is highly desirable that institutional heads functioning as parent persons be reasonable, tolerant, fair-minded, but that they grant themselves, without guilt or embarrassment, that extra edge of partiality which is the prerogative of every parent.

That means, also, that you take unto yourself in a certain way your child's failure, and a youngster who does not care at all for his own survival may suddenly care for the dignity and respect of his family.

I remember an occasion when a very small boy whom we had had under care a very brief time returned to the Center to present me with a bouquet of tulips with those suspiciously short stems which indicated clearly that they had been picked by a child. After some brief clearance between us we returned together to the home of the woman from whose yard they had been taken. The minute she opened the door she assumed, of course, that I was the child's mother and without letting me speak began a tirade against me as to what kind of mother I was that I would have such a child, going on and on about what a truly contemptible act it was. She finally agreed that she would consider 50 cents a reasonable payment for the flowers which had been picked, and I submitted our joint apologies and the 50 cents. As we left the house, the child said to me in anger, "You didn't have to take that. She hadn't any business to talk to you like that. Why didn't you tell her you were the head of Ryther and that I was a kid from the Court?" I pointed out to him that he lived with us now, that that meant Ryther was his home and that made him my child, that what he did, all of Ryther was responsible for. Suddenly he was crying pitifully and had to be reassured that we were not utterly disgraced, a few hours' work in the yard would seem fair retribution, that probably some time or other every kid had picked a neighbor's flowers and that he had to learn not to a little later than most children. Tremendous relaxation and loyalty flowed from him. Thereafter he *was* our child.

There is no area in which you will need steadier board support than that of Christmas and holiday planning. I can't conceive of any worse preparation for self-respecting adulthood than a repeated childhood experience in which you receive a multiplicity of expensive gifts from total strangers because you are "a poor little thing." I am amazed at how many agencies maintaining good professional standards still let their children be taken downtown to be feted by the Elks or the Rotary, or allow the such-and-such club to invade the privacy of the institution on Christmas Eve in order to dispense presents. There is no reason, of course, why you shouldn't accept from churches, clubs and organizations, gifts given to the agency and distributed by the agency in such way as it sees fit, either as Christmas presents or to be kept for the year-round recreational needs of children. Ninety per cent of all organizations approaching you can be brought to understand why it is so desperately necessary that these children have a family experi-

ence, getting and giving from those who love them. Occasionally there will be that club or organization which states frankly that unless they can give out presents to "the worthy poor" who will smile appreciatively when the gifts are distributed that their club "won't get any fun out of it." I suspect that that is the kind of support we're going to have to lose until we can do a better piece of interpretation regarding this benighted form of Christian generosity. Certainly those of us backed by informed boards of directors do not have to give ground before it.

Open House—When and How

In the name of community support many of us are still asked whether or not our institutions are open for inspection at any time. Certainly for the American, as well as for the Englishman, a man's home is his castle. We in America are rather informal people. We sit about our homes carelessly garbed, in slacks or housecoats. We stack the dishes if we want to go on a picnic, and on a Sunday morning the living room is likely to be a comfortable helter-skelter of newspapers and bedroom slippers and unwashed coffee cups. Although this is not true of all American homes, it is true of a great many of them, and the more children there are in the family, the more likely it is to be so. I remember in the early days of our functioning when I was still carrying a quite self-conscious attitude that we had to "look nice" for the community at any time, I came by the institution early one Sunday morning to find a comfortable boys' supervisor sitting in his robe and slippers reading the morning paper, while happy youngsters in pajamas lay on their stomachs on the floor about him listening to the radio and perusing the "funnies."

My first reaction was "How normal!" My second was, "But it's 9:30. What if someone called!" My third reaction was, "No well-bred, considerate human being calls on anybody at 9:30 Sunday morning, and if he were so inconsiderate as to do it, most families would have a convenient outer hall in which to keep him isolated until scampering children picked up possessions and got themselves out of sight."

I crossed a bridge that day. I made up my mind once and for all, and cleared with the Board of Directors, who agreed unanimously, that we were going to be content to live as happily and carelessly as American families live, without the primary responsibility of maintaining a public building. Children come to us totally untrained in everything from manners to morals. They are going to have to learn to be happy first and respectable later. And I suspect that the type of respectability represented by immaculate bathrooms and a living room always ready

for company is by no means the most important thing for them to learn.

I am sure that all of us face realistically that the more people know about our programs the more likely they are to be interested and to want to contribute and that our chance of rendering service is dependent upon that contribution. Every child in his own home accepts the fact that his parents often have guests whom he finds stuffy and uninteresting, with whom he can dispense after a perfunctory introduction. We find that by bringing people to the agency in small groups, preferably at lunchtime, where they can be introduced casually to children as our friends and visitors who have come to see us because of their interest in our program, the children accept this with nothing more than a slight resentment of the fact that we are less available to them than we would be if we did not have company. On the other hand, it happens occasionally in the life of every child that his mother entertains the ladies' aid or the bridge club or the this-or-that association when he sees frenzied cleaning and preparation throughout the entire house, when he knows that temporarily he does not count greatly in the scheme of things, and when once the big day arrives he will be expected to keep discreetly in the background or to actually absent himself from home. Such an occasion is not unreal for the institutional child either. In fact, he can be persuaded to help with some of the cleaning and scrubbing, particularly if he knows that when the affair is over he can go back to some of his lazy ways. It is the job of trying to keep yourself in shape for the ladies' aid twenty-four hours a day, day in, day out, which is the impossible task which many of us seem to assign ourselves. It is the thing which keeps our institution a public domain instead of a secure place of retreat.

There is, of course, the occasional layman and the fellow professional whom you might let in any time. I was not at the Center when the late Dr. Kasanin of San Francisco visited and was admitted immediately and informally to our household. I found staff members who had assumed the host role committed to him. His comment had been, "Good, a little on the messy side." Probably nothing is so agonizing as that occasional visitor, lay or professional, who, relatively unknown to you or to the group, says, "Don't pay any attention to me, I just want to sit right here and I want everything to go on just the same as usual," and then ensconces himself as a non-participating observer. Try that in any family home in America. If there is any red-blooded seven, eight, or nine-year-old who wouldn't put on a show in such a situation

I have yet to meet him. If there is any mother, father or staff person who wouldn't go a little stiff and unnatural I have yet to meet him. Of course, the visitor will always assure you that he will "make allowances" for all this, but it doesn't alter anybody's basic resentment. A visitor should be willing to be a part of the family or go away.

During periods when our Community Chest has asked that we maintain an open house for visitors, we have quite shamelessly packed our entire family off to the park, shown our visitors our ugly old shell of a building, and told them about our children in such a way as the story can be told without violating the privacy of their lives, including interpretation of why they are not at home. We have found people not at all resentful and most interested.

An Informed Board Shares Responsibility

None of this, of course, has any reality unless it is backed by an informed board of directors who accept it. Even before we started functioning, we tried to appraise in board meetings what our children were likely to do, and the attitude that would be sound for us to take when it occurred. When incidents did occur which seemed troublesome or to get definite negative community response, these were again cleared with the board in order that we could think together regarding a sound procedure and that the staff could have the security of knowing that an informed group of citizens stood behind them if trouble ensued. I think many agencies greatly under-rate the intelligence and tolerance of board members because we have never really presented the facts to them.

Always bear in mind that a community is basically suspicious of what goes on inside your building, as you are basically suspicious about what goes on inside some institutions where you have been barred from admission. We have to permit enough interchange with our community, person by person, to break down this barrier. I was once addressing a large civic group, trying quite earnestly to tell them of our program and to convince them that I was giving an honest interpretation of it when our milkman suddenly arose in the back of the room to give personal testimony that he was in and out of our building every day, knew all of our children, had seen them come and go, and wanted the group to know "the fine people who worked there," and the experience he had had in seeing children change and improve. That means that everything you touch, every attitude you have, every conversation you carry on, is a medium to community interpretation.

An amusing incident happened to us early in the war. Two of our little girls being unusually provident, had saved a portion of the spending money which had been given to them on Saturday, and early in the week bought a couple of packages of "cool ade" and ensconced themselves under a tree in the back yard with a large pitcher and glasses, having a party. The boys were irate, although they had had an equal amount of spending money which had all been dissipated on Saturday. Logic provided them with no answer, apparently, for an hour or two later an indignant woman appeared at the front door to inquire what the Ryther Center was doing that was unfair to the United States. Inquiry showed that two of the outraged boys had written on the side of a large paper carton, "The Ryther Child Center is unfair to us," writing the "U S" so large that the patriotic citizen had immediately assumed that we were somehow discriminating against our country. The riotous laughter produced in the group and shared equally by children and adults convinced the woman not only that we were not traitors but we were a very ordinary family with a small controversy raging around a pitcher of "cool ade." I am sure that no amount of printed pamphlets, no amount of public speaking, can build for you over the years so sound a base as that of maintaining a consistent day-by-day attitude of neighborliness and self-respect.

Some Personnel Problems

The second greatest handicap in the adequate carrying out of standard practices in institutional care, is of course the staff problem. This relates equally, it seems to me, to the competence, the number, and the emotional patterns of staff people, and is all interwoven with the community problem. It is increasingly important that persons in positions of responsibility have the education and the experience which will give them not only knowledge, but also the prestige and security to present that knowledge without aggression and without apology to boards and committees and community groups. A part of the sense of inferiority of institutional children is the projection of the sense of inferiority of the house staff as related to the better-educated, more socially secure individuals who support the program. I don't suppose there is ever going to be a time when they won't be more economically secure, because I don't believe that they are ever going to pay social workers a banker's income and I'm sure some bankers make good board members. The security, however, of being a person in your own right, with respect for your own attitudes, opinions and functions, is very

important. Some of the aggression, I think, which is often directed toward institutional children comes out of the frustration and helplessness which institutional staff feel in the face of condescending boards or administrative bodies.

Certainly the question of numbers is simpler to confront. I'm interested when every once in a while you see in the publicity of institutions, a "cottage mother" shown sitting reading to a group of 14 or 15, or 20 or 25 boys and girls of the squirmy age from 8 to 12. Place a similar responsibility upon any woman in America and you will force her in self-defense to one inevitable pattern, regimentation or suicide. It takes patience, energy and time to be alert to and deal with the hundreds of small upsets which occur when children are allowed individual freedoms. It takes time to bind the individual finger; it takes time to go to the library and to explain to the neighbors; it takes time to defend the child's individual possessions from all those around him who would like to appropriate them; it takes time to remember that the plaid shirt is John's and the dotted blouse Mary's. Probably nothing crueller has been done in the name of standardization than to ask people loaded with such a multiplicity of responsibilities that they are scarcely keeping their heads above water, to take on an assortment of individual interests which could only be done in a highly protected situation.

Agencies doing a non-resident job have been far more forthright about setting up the limitations of what a given individual can reasonably be expected to assume, in terms of a given responsibility. Somehow, somehow, we must develop the adequacy to meet the question as to why we don't do this or that with a straight statement that we will do it any time we are given resources for it, rather than with a defensive, unreal and overprotective response that we don't think it is a practical suggestion, or that it doesn't work, or any of the multiplicity of things which are our defeated and frustrated way of saying that the job is getting more than we can carry. We know today that a caseworker carrying a load of more than so many cases can't possibly be doing intensive work. That job is easier to classify, it is easier to see how much time goes into this or that activity than goes into institutional functioning, but someday one of us is going to have to take on this difficult job of analyzing the institutional worker's function.

We have, however, one inevitable measuring stick, the American home. Generally speaking, if the family group includes more than four children, and a maid

cannot be employed, somebody begins to say, referring to the mother, "Poor thing." It isn't any easier when they are somebody else's children. Put some mothers on your committee to study personnel standards or to budget for next year's staff, and then do a forthright analysis of the job which your staff workers have to do. Point out that they not only have to do the job of the ordinary mother but that they have to make up to the child for the loss of a mother in addition to years of poor training and disorganization. I don't believe it was our community that told us that one woman could take care of 14 or 20 children. I've never yet asked a community group if they thought one could, and gotten a positive answer. It came about, I believe, out of our own internal economies, unshared with our community and un confronted by it.

The question of the emotional patterns of workers is even more complicated. Why do people come into institutional care? Why do they take these hard jobs anyway? Institutional workers too often fall into two extremes, as I suppose human beings tend to fall into two possible extremes. One is the well-organized, firm, adequate human being who sees that the house is clean, the children properly clothed, meals are on time, and who, although she may be a joy to your administrative heart, somehow misses something of warmth and generosity toward children. At the other extreme there is the somewhat messy, good-natured person, who forgets this and forgets that, overlooks this and overlooks that, and is obviously so good for the children that you wonder if the building is going to hold together. The ideal person, if he or she can be found, is one who can strike a balance.

The total conclusion would seem, therefore, to be the rather obvious one, *that the institution's relationship to the community is largely dependent upon an adequate staff, functioning in relationship to clearly defined policies backed by an informed board of directors.*

League Membership

The following agency has been admitted as a provisional of the Child Welfare League of America:

Seattle Children's Home
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Miss Dorothy Crounse, Director

New League Publications

BOARD RATES—1946. A follow-up study based on replies to a questionnaire from member agencies. Special Bulletin. May, 1947. 20 pp. 40 cents.

Joint and Differential Responsibilities in Planning Placement of Children*

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THE title of this paper implies that both children's and family agencies share some responsibilities in planning for the placement of children. At the same time it implies a growing awareness that differences of agency function and policy within these two fields are factors which make a division of labor desirable.

What that division needs to be cannot be answered adequately until we examine just what is involved in this process for the agency, for the worker, for the parent, and for the child. The placement function of an agency is a clearly focused task and yet there is need for defining this service, for stating it in such a way that the extent and the limitations of the service are clear to the community, to other agencies and to ourselves. For instance, we don't place *any* child under *any* circumstance. We are all limited in what we can do by the degree of community understanding and acceptance of responsibility, by the extent of community support, by availability of the service of other agencies, and by the degree of our knowledge of the methods and procedures of extending help to those who need it. Granting that there are differences in different communities and that change within the same community and a continual readaptation of our function is necessary in order to meet changing social conditions, we should be able to so state our policies and procedures that they define for the worker the direction and the boundaries of the service. It is this kind of responsible action on the part of the agency which will help the worker and the parent come to an understanding regarding the parent's ability to bear all that is involved in separation and to know with some degree of certainty whether he can work with the agency in this process.

The policies and procedures then, as well as the function, become important elements in our service, both from the point of view of the worker who represents the agency in this helping process and from the point of view of the parent who asks for help. The caseworker in a family agency will help the parent explore the possibilities for himself in his own unique situation; that is, she will help the parent use the strengths he has to deal with his own realities as they

relate to his role in his family. She has the responsibility of evaluating the parent's strengths and resources in relation to keeping the family together; she has the responsibility, too, of helping him come to some other decision when keeping the family together is no longer desirable or possible. Placement may be one of those considerations. If the parent and the worker agree that he wants to explore this possibility, a referral to the children's agency is indicated.

I do not believe that a worker can extend responsible help beyond the function of the agency in which she works. I do not believe that a parent can be helped in the most effective way unless the function, policies and procedures of our service have been developed for the purpose of helping him with the specific problem he brings to us.

The Role of Parent in Placement

It is at this point that confusion exists between children's and family agencies. So long as we think in terms of the role of children's and family agencies in planning for the placement of children, without consideration of the role of the parent, this confusion will continue. When we accept a parent's inherent right and responsibility in planning for his child, when we accept the fact that it is he, and no other person or agency in the community, with whom we must share responsibility for the plan, his role takes on an increased significance, and the structure of the service we set up will be related to first, helping the parent decide whether he can really accept for himself all that is involved in separation from his child, and second, whether he can work with us toward a future plan for his child.

In a private agency, the starting point is the parent who makes application for the placement of his child. Since we now recognize that the placement process is a sharing process between the parent and the agency from the very beginning, the initial contacts of the parent with the agency assume increased importance. It is the situation of the parent which makes him consider placement as a solution for himself. It is his situation which motivates him to take the initial step of seeking help from the agency. As an indication then that he is now ready to take this first

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Henrietta L. Gordon, *Editor*

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How Many Dollars for Next Year?

THE next four months will see many budget hearings affecting the welfare of children. It is time to ask one another, "How can our agency sustain the quality and quantity of service it has developed?" "How, in 1948, can we make those long-awaited improvements?" "How can we or other agencies expand services so that our community no longer will stand disgraced by its failure to provide adequately for all its dependent, neglected and acutely disturbed children?"

Trusteeship is anemic unless it impels us to such questioning. These are days when communities cannot afford to support ineffective services. Within agencies we need to get the most possible out of each dollar we spend, assuring ourselves and others, especially the children concerned, that the dependents entrusted to us can expect to achieve independence.

In scores of communities throughout the country board committees not only are scrutinizing budgets but also are actively engaged in studies of community needs. It is not sufficient to assume enlarged budgets to be the natural consequence of increased living costs. Board members will need to decide whether the agencies for which they are responsible are actually meeting criteria for good service at the same time they evaluate the total job of community work for children. They will need to know in addition how their agencies have kept pace with the increase in "know-how" in child care. Social needs and services do not remain static. This is apparent in any review of services to children as they were ten years ago and today.

The pay roll usually and properly comprises the largest item in the budget for any type of child welfare service. To retain the workers who are competent and to fill vacancies with qualified personnel is good business here as in all corporate enterprises. A review of data on salaries, including consideration of other fields such as education and health services, is timely. By July the League hopes to have preliminary data available from the study of salaries and qualifications

of child welfare workers now being made among our members by the Department of Statistics of the Russell Sage Foundation. Some agencies that are uncertain about the current salary situation will do well to await these data or to budget salaries with the understanding that they may be revised in view of the findings of this important study. Realism regarding salaries still is wanting in many agencies known to the League. Vacant positions often indicate the need for revision of salary schedules. It means little to say, "We have vacancies and the funds for additional staff," if the salary ranges do not allow reasonable increments.

It is important to allow for a retirement plan and where this has not been done it is practical to include five per cent of the pay roll as an initial anticipation of this item. The National Health and Welfare Retirement Association, 15 Maiden Lane, New York City, expects the agency to contribute seven per cent of each participant's salary, but with a few workers not participating and a few ineligible, the over-all allowance of five per cent usually will cover the agency's contribution. Most community chests encourage participation of member agencies in this retirement plan.

In allowing pay roll for positions unfilled it is important to consider medical and dental services, too often expenditures reduced during the war due to the scarcity of physicians and dentists. Many an agency needs to double its outlay for health services.

In foster home service it is the amount paid for board, in institutions it is the cost of provisions which usually is the second largest item in the budget. Careful study of available data and of the experience of your own agency may point to need of substantial revisions in these basic expenditures.

Recent analysis of several budgets has shown that all items of expense have risen in the last five years, even the amount spent for insurance. The insurance rates may be the same but the value of property has increased to an extent to warrant increased insurance coverage.

The old questions of quality and coverage, with us as never before, have been given attention frequently in these columns. The answers are not to be delegated to social workers only for solution. In order to have meaning, the solutions must be achieved by board members and indeed by all who support the work. Whatever the immediate or long-range answer to this question in your community or in your agency, one obvious fact should be kept in mind. Inferior service is costly in that it fails to achieve, in any full sense, its objective. When children need bread we do not hand them stones.

HOWARD W. HOPKIRK

Joint and Differential Responsibilities in Planning Placement of Children

(Continued from page 7)

step toward asking for help in the solution of his problem, it becomes important that the responsibility for making an appointment for his first interview rests with him. We all know that original requests for an appointment for a parent often come from many sources other than the parent himself. They come from members of the family, from interested individuals, from other agencies, or even from another worker within a multiple function agency, all from people who know of the parent's situation and who feel that placement offers a solution. Although the referring person has discussed placement with the parent, how can we know from a referral whether the parent considers placement even as a possible solution to his problem?

Because of the high number of appointments broken by the parent when made for him by someone else, the staff of the agency with which I am associated gave serious consideration to this problem. We came to the conclusion that unless the parent could assume responsibility for making an appointment himself, he was not yet ready to consider the placement of his child. When a parent is able to take this step it is an indication that he, too, feels that placement is a possible solution for him. We handle indirect referrals now by saying that we will be very glad to arrange for an appointment for the parent, but suggest that he call himself so that a time can be arranged which will be mutually agreeable. With this procedure our percentage of broken appointments was considerably reduced while the parent was more ready to discuss his problem as it related to the care of his child away from himself. Where there is a parent, and I am limiting this discussion to those situations where the parent retains legal responsibility for his child and where there is no reason why he should not continue to do so, we can never usurp his right to make this decision for himself. The parent, therefore, and not the child, becomes our first client. Where there are two parents retaining joint legal responsibility for the child, it becomes necessary to know how each feels about giving up the child to the agency, and to know what part each will play, together or separately, in sharing the responsibility with the agency, and directly with the child. The caseworker, who knows only too well the meaning of separation for the child, the hazards of placement, even under the best of controlled conditions, may feel that for the best interests of the child, she

should explore, with the parent, the resources and strengths within the family group which might be utilized in keeping this family together. But in doing this she is ignoring the fact that the home is already either physically or psychologically broken, or both, that the parent has already accepted his need for considering placement in asking for help, and that psychologically he has already taken the first step toward the separation of himself from his child. The parent has initiated this contact with the agency out of his own need. Regardless of the reality situation which motivated him to take this step, he is tremendously affected. He is affected first, because of the crisis in his life which has made his consideration of placement necessary, and second, because he feels that his future and that of his child will be different. By starting at a point other than where the parent is, the worker focuses on the hazards of placement for the child, and is unable to relate herself to the parent and the way in which he sees his need.

We do find parents coming to the agency with varying degrees of readiness to accept separation. One may not be ready at all to part with his child. He would not consider doing so if there seemed any way to keep his child with him. Under these circumstances does he know of other resources in the community which he might use? When a parent comes to us blindly in his own desperation, when he wants placement for his child, only as a last resort, when he is unaware of other community resources, then we have a responsibility of exploring other possibilities with him. But we cannot know all that is involved for each parent to accept help from another agency. We must help him discover this for himself. We can tell him whom to see and where to go. By initiating his contact with the other agency himself, he indicates his readiness to explore other services in relation to his own need.

So when a parent asks for help with the placement of his child he is saying that at this time, for him, this would be the solution of his problem. He may or may not be ready to relinquish his child to the agency and to share responsibility with the agency for the future well-being of his child. He may come with little understanding of how, when and on what terms the agency can help. It is in consideration of these conditions of placement that the parent and the agency first become related. As the worker and the parent consider together the concrete terms of placement, financial responsibility, visiting, medical permit, medical care, clothing, etc., the parent will begin to understand what is involved for him in sharing responsibility for his child with the agency, and the

worker will begin to understand the degree to which the parent is ready to become separated from his child. In these early contacts, and throughout the period of placement, it is of particular importance that the worker reaffirm the fact to the parent that this child is his, and that for a period of time the agency provides care, under certain conditions, only because he, the parent, wills it to be so.

Casework With Parent

The conditions of placement vary from agency to agency. Whatever these conditions are it seems to me that they should not only be clearly defined by each agency, but that they should be within what the agency itself is able to provide and what they found, through experience, essential if placement is to be possible and helpful to parent and child. For instance, there is some question as to the practice of asking the parent to have the child committed to the agency in order to make it possible to receive public support for the child. Aside from all the other implications of such a practice, and there are many, we are negating the fact that this child belongs to this parent. Our future relationship with the parent may become jeopardized, for we are not only taking his child from him physically, but legally. In private agencies we assume responsibility for the child for relatively short periods of care. If the placement is to have constructive meaning for the child and the parent, it is important that a sustained relationship be maintained between the parent and the worker who represents the agency throughout this period. We are not being realistic when we emphasize the sharing nature of this process at the same time we set up psychological barriers by requiring that this child become ours in a legal sense. We need to examine this procedure from the point of view of the parent as well as from the point of view of the need of the agency. We need to examine it in terms of a clearly defined division of labor between the public and the private field. We should confine our service to those areas where the public, tax-supported agency does not provide care. If we feel that the practice of taking custody obstructs our service then it is inherently unsound.

The worker then must know with certainty on what terms the agency can give service. She must have accepted these terms so that she is comfortable in stating them to the parent if she is to meet him on a warm, professional level as they explore together what is involved in this service. In my own agency we know what it costs the agency to care for a child,

including the cost of service. The financial agreement which the parents are asked to sign itemizes these costs into board, medical care, clothing and service, so that the parent knows how we arrive at our total cost of care. The agreement is accepted by the parent after the worker and the parent together determine the extent of the parent's ability to assume financial responsibility for his child. He knows how the money he pays will be used. If he is unable to pay for the full cost of care, he knows that the agency pays for the difference through community contributions to the Community Chest. Budgetary limitations make it necessary that we receive a 65% reimbursement from the parents for the costs of board, medical care and clothing. After the child is placed, the parent is billed monthly in relation to his agreement. When financial agreements are made on a realistic basis, and handled in a businesslike manner, we find that a parent's actual payments can represent the degree to which the parent understands and feels that he is a part of this placement process and are an indication of the degree of his acceptance of separation, the meaning this has for him in terms of his acceptance or rejection of his child.

Our work with the parent must have continuity and direction from the point of application to the discharge of his child from care.

The initial steps toward placement then are focused on the parent's need, on his understanding of the meaning of separation for himself and for his child and on the terms by which the agency can give this service. Even when these are understood and agreed upon in the beginning they do not always guarantee smooth sailing. Preparation for an experience makes the reality less difficult, but it does not determine exactly how we are going to handle that reality when it comes. We will always find some parents who will continue to be beset with life's inner and outer demands, who will have such conflicting feelings about their children that they will be unable to follow the course and adhere to the rules, though they had been mutually agreed upon. A continuous, co-operative, harmonious relationship between the agency and the parent is to be desired but not always attained. We can weather the ups and downs however so long as our service to parents is focused from the beginning on helping them in behalf of their children.

Casework Help to Child

What do we need to know and what do we need to do to help children in behalf of themselves? A few years ago we were concerned with trying to know

everything that had happened before this request for service, for we knew that a child's experiences, his affectional relationships, together with his own constitutional make-up, which was predetermined at birth, combined to mold his personality structure. We knew then, as we know today, that the sum total of these things has gone into the making of what the child is now. Because of our need to feel more secure in our attempts to help a child, and because in a certain sense we mistook knowledge for skill, and because we were often unrelated to the central core of the problem, which was the placement of the child, we became lost in a maze of activity in relation to obtaining material which would help us understand the reasons which might account for the behavior of the child today. We needed to know as much as possible not only about his life, but the lives of his parents and his parents' parents. Our hunt for knowledge was often at the expense of our becoming related to the child with respect to this question of placement and of helping him move into this new experience with our support.

We do not feel now that we need to know everything about a child's past, but rather that part of his past which illuminates the present, which will enable us to choose the kind of placement best suited to his needs, and which will help us in our treatment of the emotional problems created for the child and the parent in the process of placement. As the parent discusses his problem with us, we will learn about the affectional relationships in the home, how the child has reacted to these, and his resultant behavior. We will understand what strengths the home has had for the child, what deprivation he has suffered, and at what age. We know that emotional relationships which exist in earliest childhood have profound effects on the personality. A child who has suffered severe emotional deprivation at an early age, who has never had a loving parent with whom he could identify himself, will consequently be unable to love another. His aggression often becomes externalized, for he has nothing to lose by his hostile and aggressive acts. This form of behavior becomes the only way he has of releasing his hostility and of gaining attention for himself. He becomes a problem in placement, for he will continue to cling, psychologically at least, to the parent who has failed him and will be unable to relate himself to foster parents who would give him loving care. This knowledge will guide us in choosing either an institutional placement or a foster home where the foster parents can be less demanding of affection. We think of institutional placement for a child with problems which would

prevent him from relating to foster parents and for older children who are normally wanting to break away from parental ties, because by the very nature of institutional service the relationships of the child and the adults are on a less personal level. We normally think of foster home placement for the child under adolescence, who has been loved at an early age, for he will be better able to form a relationship with substitute parents.

Once we accept the child for care, however, our focus with the parent, and with the child, is on the placement itself. In my own agency we have found that a parent can be helped to initiate this movement toward placement with a child old enough to comprehend language. The child has a right to know what is going to happen to him and why. This can best come first from the parent who has made this decision for his child, and who will continue to share responsibility for his child, even after he has given him to the agency. The parent then shares in this process from the beginning, and the child knows that his parent has asked us to help find a place for him to live. Thus the child first meets the caseworker as a person who is there to help because the parent wills it to be so and not as one who for some unknown reason is planning to separate him from his parent. Thus the worker's relationship with the child begins at this point through the medium of the placement function of the agency. We must be comfortable in our feeling that placement *is* our business, that at this time placement is necessary for this child, and finally that we are assuming responsibility for the agency for what comes next. While we can never know exactly what placement means for a particular child, we do know that removing a child from his own home is fraught with meaning for both the child and the parent. For the child it is a frightening experience, for he is losing the only security he has ever had; he is leaving the known for the unknown. How can we support this child over such uncharted seas? He can neither comprehend the full significance of going into a foster home nor can he work with us on the total process. But we have learned that he can understand and work with us on one part of it at a time. Thus, removing a child from his own home is not accomplished in one step, but in several. It is only as we are able to define these steps and work on them individually with the child, that he becomes free to accept or rebel against what is happening to him. Our aim now is not to make this as easy for ourselves as possible by denying that the child has feeling about what is happening to him, nor to place him hurriedly so that he can get the pain done with,

but rather to recognize that he does have feeling, and that unless we make it possible for him to express it, he can never really participate in his own placement. The child's participation, then, becomes possible as he and the caseworker together take one step at a time; the worker permitting the child to express his feeling, while she sustains him through her affirmation that this is a part of placement. Thus the practical, mechanical steps toward placement become the means of engaging the child in this plan. The repetitive use of language, especially with younger children, and the element of time itself are both used by the worker in preparing a child for placement. It is through this kind of participation with the worker that the child gains strength to move into this new experience. We can know a child is ready to go into his new home when he can affirm that he is going.

While the agency assumes complete responsibility for choosing a particular home for a particular child, we know that the parent as well as the child has a very real interest in knowing something about this new home and the people in it. How this is accomplished will depend on the circumstances in each situation. The details of the home will certainly be discussed with both the parent and the child. A visit to the home prior to placement may or may not be a part of the plan. If this is done it should only occur after the child is ready to move into the actual placement situation, for at that time he will be able to use this experience in a positive way, thus becoming further engaged in the reality of placement. When done at this time, we have found that the visit is particularly helpful with older children who are going into an institution.

Once the child is moved into a foster home, the worker who represents the agency has the responsibility of maintaining a casework relationship with the child, with the parent, and with the foster parents, relationships which will often be delicately balanced, but which will be focused on the child's adjustment in the foster home. Subsequently the casework may be directed toward replacement if that should become necessary, or toward the return of the child to his own home when this is indicated. Thus we see placement as a continuous, sustained process from the time the parent first makes application for placement until the child is discharged from care.

Are special skills called for in this service? If so,

how are they developed? Just as the acceptance of agency function made for more responsible casework, I believe that specialization within that function will increase our knowledge and develop our skill. Professional competence in every profession depends on the acquiring of a body of knowledge plus the ability to use this knowledge in a helpful way. During the last decade considerable literature has been built up in relation to the placement of children. These contributions to our further understanding of the casework process in relation to specific problems could only have come from those practitioners who were able to work in the area of their special responsibilities within the limits of a well-defined agency function. But increased knowledge and understanding may have a paralyzing effect on workers who are called upon to perform every service in an undifferentiated multiple function agency with little opportunity to perfect skill in applying their understanding and knowledge. Skill, the ability to be helpful to another person, is the thing for which we are striving. This is developed in the casework field, as it is in every other area of human endeavor, as a worker is able to use her knowledge over and over again, in relation to specific problems, and to test her skill against the results obtained within the area of a well-defined service.

Conclusions

This paper has dealt with the problem of placement as it relates to a specific function of an agency; it has dealt with process as it relates to the giving of help; and it has dealt with specialized services as a way of developing skill. It seems incongruous that we should have accepted the idea of agency function and at the same time discuss "Joint and Differential Responsibilities" in so clearly defined an area as the placement of children. Can it be that we want to be all things to all people? Can it be that by giving up something we would feel less adequate? Is it that we distrust services other than our own? If children's and family agencies do have joint responsibilities in this area it is that of recognizing each other's services, of defining our own functions, of accepting our own limitations, of recognizing a parent's inalienable right to make a decision for himself so that when a referral is indicated it can be done easily with the full confidence that our client will be better served by the agency whose function it is to extend him help in the area of his recognized need.

What the Layman Does Not Know About Adoption

MARJORIE WILSON, *Member of the Board*

De Pelchin Faith Home and Children's Bureau, Houston, Texas

WHATEVER personal convictions we may have about adoption, it is certain that none of us can deny to the subject social aspects. And the more we try to think the thing out, the more these aspects keep appearing from every possible direction till at last the subject fairly bristles with them.

Some of them relate to the child himself, to his health difficulties, his intellectual possibilities; some to the mother with her present problems, her background, her relations with her family; some again to the would-be parents and their adjustment; very many to community attitudes and community conditions.

These aspects do not deal only with the individuals we now know or with the problems with which we are now working but they have such a way of reaching back into the past and of stretching forward into the future that at last we find ourselves thinking back rather wistfully to the good old days before we ever came into contact with any social agency or any social worker. Life seemed so much less complicated then.

I am sure that when I first became a board member of a children's agency there was nothing I did not know about adoption. It was as easy as A.B.C. You had a child who needed a home and a home that needed a child and you put the one into the other and everybody lived happily ever after!

Sometimes it is very easy to forget that many people in the community still share this idea. Board members and committee members of agencies usually learn better. Clients who come to consult the agency realize that another point of view is at least possible, but, generally speaking, the majority of people who have not been "personally exposed" to adoption think of it as a very simple situation. When an agency introduces difficulties, then there is considerable questioning and sometimes deep resentment at what is thought of as "agency red tape."

What is Good Practice

What we need to understand is this: there are not only different aspects to adoption but there are also different ways of looking at those aspects, according to the vantage point of the person who is doing the looking. The aspect of the layman who is looking at it from a distance is very different from that of the professional who views it from a ringside seat.

Every professional person needs to keep this constantly in mind, for it is something that is very easy indeed to forget.

In the last few years there has been scientific study of child welfare which has resulted in the collection of a great mass of knowledge and in the establishment of standards and philosophies of child placement.

To the professional worker, acutely alive to the need, the development of these policies has undoubtedly seemed very slow in coming but to us lay people it has often come before we have been educated to completely assimilate it.

In any specialized field, popular beliefs held by the community must always lag behind the knowledge of the experts. This is inevitable, but it does lead to misunderstanding when the two groups have to get together as they naturally must do, particularly in a problem like adoption where most of the people personally concerned come from the lay group.

Social work as a profession is still rather new to us and we haven't quite accepted it.

Moreover, professional social work had been pretty well established before anything developed in the field of adoption that could possibly be termed either professional or scientific. Adoption procedure according to definite standards is still a very new thing even to some social workers.

Twelve or fifteen years ago, our own agency was placing children with kindly solicitude but without very much knowledge either of child or family.

It is only fifteen years or so since the Children's Aid Society used to send busloads of homeless children round the country and wherever they stopped, people crowded round and with as much care as they would a puppy picked out any child who caught their fancy. That was thrown up to me recently as an example of "Agency Adoption"; it was certainly a colorful and spectacular one. It is an interesting commentary that some of the sons and daughters of these very children later became wards of our own local agency.

In our own state of Texas even today there are a number of agencies, some of them licensed, making placements in a way very contrary to modern practice.

It is really small wonder that people in general haven't quite caught on yet. It is not only the idea of

carefully planned adoptions that is comparatively new but also that we really have no way of telling what constitutes a reliable agency or what we have a right to expect of one after we find it.

Of the children placed last year for adoption only 10% were placed through recognized agencies. There are many reasons to account for this percentage but I have an idea that a little well-directed propaganda would greatly help out that other 90%.

Parents Shy of Social Agencies

I am not thinking so much in this connection of would-be parents. I am thinking more of the natural parents and their relatives who might be much slower in taking the first chance offered them to dispose of the baby if the service that an agency had to offer in security and protection were common knowledge. In this connection I have one special group in mind.

Illegitimate children are born to parents who represent a pretty average cross section of American life. Sometimes they are born to maids, carhops, etc.; sometimes they are born to girls of considerable culture and undeniable social position. These potentially superior babies rarely come to the attention of an agency and may easily have none of the protection and skillful planning that goes with the placement of the child of a less socially favored mother.

This is true not only because of the desire for secrecy but also because they have the money to make this secrecy possible. The idea of making use of an agency does not occur to that social class. An agency is something for poor people which the community chest supports. I doubt if there is one well-to-do family out of a hundred which would ever think of it in terms of its having something to offer them personally. Theirs are personal and intensely private problems.

There are a great many aspects of adoption to which we lay people are very seldom exposed. We know of the community interest due to the scarcity of babies. We may also know of one or two cases of happy placement and it is very difficult for us not to generalize from a particular case with which we are individually familiar. Rarely if ever are we brought face to face in personal contact with the tragedies of adoption.

And yet there is case after case of parents who have taken a child in perfectly good faith who find the child totally unfit to lead a normal life. And in child-caring agencies all over the country there is case after case of children placed without safeguards who, after placement has broken down, have passed from hand to hand, finally coming to the attention

of the agency when they are too old and perhaps too damaged by experience to be any longer placeable.

Perhaps even more tragic is the appearance of children who, while not themselves adopted, are the children of fathers and mothers who have been and whose resultant insecurity has made it impossible for them, in their turn, to provide a stable home for their children.

It will always be hard for the layman and the professional to come all the way together on the subject of adoption and I think the reason for this lies right here. After all, our deep convictions and our philosophy of life must come in the main from the depths of our own personal experience and one cannot expect a layman who sees at firsthand only stories which seem to end happily to have the same sort of conviction as the professional worker whose experience is so radically different. Again and again the professional worker sees the bitter tragedy which he feels could have been avoided and his thinking must always be colored by the knowledge of those children whom he knows individually and with whose problems he must personally deal.

Adoptability of Children in Institutions

The great majority of the wards of a children's institution are not placeable for adoption. For the most part they are from homes broken not so much by death as by divorce, disease or the inadequacy of parents. Frequently, therefore, they have relatives with a legal claim on them and the decision as to when and whether that claim can be severed is made not by social agencies but by the courts. No judge is going to deprive a father or mother permanently of his parental rights without very definite proof of unfitness.

This sounds elementary but as a matter of fact it is very little known by the community in general and is one of the outstanding causes of misunderstanding. People think of children in institutions as "orphans"; that is, without father or mother, and, what is more, they think of them as attractive, adoptable orphans! Popular critics are always harping on the theme of orphanages filled to overflowing with children whom the grim social workers refuse to release. As a matter of fact, the population of many of our high-class boarding schools would show a cross section very much like that of the population of many of our children's agencies except that in the agency there is an economic problem in addition to the basic one of the broken home.

This is a point that cannot be overemphasized in publicity. Another is this: of the children who are

genuinely orphaned, most come to the attention of an agency when they are well past the infancy period, and for an adopted child middle age begins around three or four years of age. It is one thing to find an adoptive home for an infant and quite another to find one for an eight- or ten-year-old, particularly one whose experiences have been damaging ones.

As a result, most children placed in agencies for adoption are of illegitimate birth. It is however by no means every unmarried mother who gives up her child. And there again is where we lay people really get ourselves worked up. On any subject of which one knows very little, it is extremely easy to generalize and it does seem like a nice, practical, common-sense generalization to insist that every unmarried mother should hand over her baby to some childless married couple. It sounds as if two difficult problems were being solved by the transfer of just one small child.

We are unlikely to realize that numbers of illegitimate children can never be placed because of some known hereditary weakness. We are not likely to know that at times all the social workers in the world could not persuade some mothers to give up their children.

We certainly need help to make us realize that an unmarried mother who has given up her child does not then conveniently vanish into thin air, that she goes on living and influencing the happiness and the lives of all those with whom she comes most closely in contact.

Whether she gives up her child or not, she has been through a deep emotional experience and if she is allowed to emerge with a feeling of complete frustration, the effect of this frustration does not end with her but is liable to be carried on in the future in her attitude to, and treatment of, future children who may be born to her; thus she may bring forth a new group of maladjusted personalities.

I have been trying to think back fifteen years to the time when I first became a board member of a children's agency and to get clearly in mind just what at that time I knew about adoption. This is not easy. As we learn more about any subject, the new knowledge becomes incorporated into our way of thinking and things which were at first by no means obvious seem to become matters of course. It is hard to put ourselves in the place of a new person entering the field and it needs a real effort to do so.

In the case of the professional worker, this needs far more effort. He has been exposed so long and so closely and has had so many experiences to bolster his convictions that he has advanced very far ahead of popular thinking.

I wonder if this difference in viewpoint is sufficiently recognized by the social worker. If it is not, it might account for the fact that so much adoption publicity misses its mark. It may also account for some of the popular resentment toward adoption practices. This resentment is very serious, for it not only robs many children of their right to careful placement but it causes bad feeling, which frequently extends to other aspects of social work as a profession.

I think we can all agree that definite standards and a philosophy of child placement have been arrived at which we can accept as generally sound. At the same time we must also agree that we are doing very little to overcome community criticism and that often the majority of those who need the service that agencies have to offer either do not know of those services or are unable to make use of them. There is something wrong with our public relations or our methods of interpretation.

Many agencies do publish adoption pamphlets but their scope is restricted and their distribution even more so. Individuals write articles in social work journals but who with a prospective, illegitimate baby in the family is going to search for help between the covers of such a publication?

Popular magazines and the more lowly pulp magazines offer far greater promise as a medium but the material offered to them must be prepared by someone who is not only an expert but who has in addition real imagination and a facile pen.

The profession of social work has a product to offer that is really valuable. Now it is its responsibility to make that product known.

BOOK NOTES

DAY CARE CENTERS FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN. By Clara M. Allen. Child Welfare League of America, N. Y. 1947. 80 pp. \$1.00.

The day-care centers for children of working mothers operated during the war provided one solution to what had been a community problem for years. The patriotic appeal for women to work in war industries aroused community interest in the need for adequate care for children whose mothers were working. The Federal Government through the Lanham Act provided funds for the operation of day-care centers for children of women working in war industries for the war emergency period only. Miss Clara M. Allen in the pamphlet, "Day Care Centers for School Children," stresses the continuing need for day-care centers for children whose own homes for various reasons, such as mothers working, mothers dead, illness, need for companionship of other children, overcrowded housing, do not meet their needs. The experience of the centers established in the state of Connecticut and operated with Lanham Act funds provided the background for the analysis of the need, of how to start a center, and for good practice in administration and operation.

There is a detailed account of the first step in the organization of a community committee representing all agencies interested in child welfare to act as a planning and advisory committee, whether the center is to be operated under public or private auspices. The financial costs of operating day-care centers are high but such a committee could interpret to the community the services rendered by the centers in terms of normal child development and in prevention of juvenile delinquency.

The chapter on "Program" emphasizes the need for the child to participate in planning the program under the guidance of skilled adult leadership. The activities of the children should be geared to interests of the different age groups participating in the program.

When selecting personnel it is of utmost importance for every member of the staff, director, leaders, cook, janitor, and all others, to be qualified for the position, to be in accord with the objectives of the center, and to work together harmoniously. Working conditions and salaries should be comparable to those of similar positions in the community.

I do not concur with Miss Allen that parent counselor service should be a special co-operative service provided by the family service agencies. In our community the parent counselor was considered an essential service to provide the close relationship and understanding between the parent and the center staff which is important to the child's adjustment and development. When the Lanham Act funds failed to provide for parent counseling service, the family agencies loaned caseworkers to the day-care centers so that the children and parents would have the service which was considered essential to the welfare of all those concerned with the care and development of the children. The need and value of the parent counseling service was demonstrated to be a necessary service for the child, the parent, and the center staff. The cost for this service therefore should not be contributed by a family agency as a special service but should be included in the total day-care budget.

Although this pamphlet was written about day-care centers for school age children, the general principles could also be applied to centers for preschool age children. In our community the parents indicated greater need for care for preschool than for school age children.

Any agency or community interested in day-care centers for children will find this pamphlet extremely helpful as it explains in detail what is necessary in planning, administrating, and operating day-care

centers so that the children have an opportunity for normal healthy physical and emotional development.

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PRINCIPLES OF CONFIDENTIALITY IN SOCIAL WORK. American Association of Social Workers. Washington, D. C. 1946. 29 pp. 40 cents.

This pamphlet should be of value to those who want to review the whole question of confidentiality in social work. It has long been assumed as a principle, but practices vary to a point where they cannot be said to have any uniformity.

The Report recognized that there is need for:

1. Clarification of the meaning of the word "confidentiality."
2. Development of policy by individual agencies.
3. Development of inter-agency policies within communities.
4. Interpretation to clients and to the public of the profession's obligation to confidentiality.

The committee has set up its report on the basis of these four major principles:

1. The client should be used as the primary source of information about himself, and information sought from him should be limited to that which is essential to provide service.
2. Within the agency information regarding a client should be revealed only to those persons and to the extent necessary to provide service.
3. Other agencies and individuals should be consulted only with the client's consent and within the limits of that consent.
4. Only that information should be recorded and those records maintained that are essential to provide service, and the use of records should be determined by agency function and the consent of the client.

It then discusses each principle separately and adds to the discussion the possible exceptions to the principle and the administrative implications involved.

I feel the wide allowance for exceptions seems to weaken to a certain extent the principles as set forth, and would like to suggest that those who are interested in studying this question read as well Oscar Whitebook's article on this subject, which was written in answer to this pamphlet.*

The pamphlet has limited its discussion to the ethical approach, leaving the legal implications to a further study. Such a study is among the recommendations made by the committee in the interest of developing uniformity of practice among agencies.

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* Dr. Whitebook has written an article, "The Professional Confidence in the Case Work Relationship," *The Family*, November, 1945; *The Compass*, April, 1946.